Hazarous effect of the pesticides

4073. SHRI MENTAY PADMANABHAM:

SHRI VIREN J. SHAH:

SHRI PRAMOD MAHAJAN:

SHRI RAM JETHMALANI:

SHRI RANJIT SINGH:

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE be pleased to state:

(a) whether his attention has been drawn to the press report "Pesticides: Boon or bane" published in the Indian Express (Bombay) of 19th February, 1992;

(b) if so, whether Government are aware about the reports of the WHO and UN to the effect that the level of chlorinated pesticides intake is higher among Indians than among people of other countries;

(c) if so, whether Government have made any survey or investigation in this regard and if so, what are the details;

(d) whether Government have made any efforts to reduce the use of DDT and BHC beyond tolerance limits; and

(e) what steps Government have taken to make the people aware of it?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE (SHRI MULLAPPALLY RAMACHANDRAN): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) Yes, Sir.

(c) Investigations made by Government Institutions/other organisations in collaboration with FAO-WHO to analyse the residue level of chronated pesticides like DDT and BHC in various food commodities have revealed that the residues were within the tolerance limits in majority of samples. Similarly, as per the studies conducted by the Indian Council of Medical Research under the WHO/UNEP Project, the level of residue of DDT and BHC in mother's milk were found to be comparable to some of the developed countries.

(d) Considering the recommendations of an Expert Committee, the Government have withdrawn the use of DDT in Agriculture and restricted its use to 10,000 MT for public health purposes per annum. The use of BHC is not permitted on vegetables, fruits, oil seed crops and for preservation of foodgrains.

The State Governments are advised to popularise the substitute insecticides to further reduce the use of BHC.

The Maximum Residue Limits (MRL) for DDT and BHC have been fixed for agricultural commodities under the Prevention of Food Adulteration Act, 1954 to regulate the same.

(e) The major steps taken by the Government to create awareness among people on the safe and judicious use of pesticides are given below:

(i) Training of Extension Functionaries at various levels on different aspects of pesticides including safe handling and uses is imparted both by the concerned Department of Centre and the State Governments.

(ii) The State Extension Functionaries organise demonstration and train farmers to create awareness on the safe and judicious use of pesticides. The training includes the precautions required to be observed to overcome the hazardous effects of pesticides.

(iii) The Associations of Pesticide Industries as also individual firms manufacturing pesticides also organises demonstrations and training programmes at grass-root level to create awareness on the safe and judicious use of pesticides.

(iv) Further, to reduce the use of pesticides, Government is advocating the adoption of Integrated Pest Management (IPM). This approach emphasises on pest surveillance, use of non-chemical methods of pest management like cultural, mechanical, biological control and use of chemical pesticides only when pest attack crosses Economic Threshold Level (ETL).